

## **REMARKS**

Claims 1-15, 19-23, 29-43 and 47-51 are pending in the application, with Claims 1, 9, 19, 29, 37 and 47 being independent claims. Claims 1-6, 9-13, 29-34, 37-41 and 47-49 are again rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Padovani (U.S. Patent No. 6,574,211 B2) in view of Laroia (U.S. Patent No. 6,708,040 B1). Claims 7, 8, 14, 15, 22, 23, 35, 36, 42, 43, 50 and 51 remain objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants have submitted herewith a declaration under 37 C.F.R. § 1.131 establishing that the presently claimed invention was conceived and reduced to practice prior to the effective filing date of the Laroia patent, thereby rendering moot the use of the Laroia patent as prior art against the claimed invention. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 1-6, 9-13, 29-34, 37-41 and 47-49 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Padovani in view of Laroia.

Accordingly, independent Claims 1, 9, 29, 37 and 47 are allowable.

While not conceding the patentability of the dependent claims, *per se*, Claims 2-6, 10-13, 19-21, 29-34, 37-41, 44-46, 48 and 49 are also allowable for at least the above reason.

Accordingly, all of the claims pending in the Application, namely, 1-15, 19-23, 29-43 and 47-51, are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference or personal interview would facilitate resolution of any remaining matters, the Examiner may contact Applicants' attorney at the number given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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